NAQCC News

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1. SPRINT: Our sprint is this Thursday, November 19th at 0130-0330Z (which of course is the evening before if you go by local instead of UTC time.) All amateur radio operators should know about Z/UTC time and not even need such a reminder so we are discontinuing them next year and will only use Z/UTC dates and times when referring to our sprints.

Our next to last special award certificate goes to the winner of a drawing among the following: The one making the highest score in each division and having the earliest date of their first ham radio license. You need not have been licensed continually, only the date of your first license counts. Beginning next year we are replacing our sprint special award certificates with a first-timer award certificate that is the same for every sprint. It goes to the one who enters and submits a log for one of our sprints for the very first time and makes the highest score among the first-timers.

If you are entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed WG0AT (N0A), AB9CA, W6AZ (N6A), N3RBN, VE3KQN, WA9KPZ (N9A) as first time participants and/or log submitters. If our first-timer award were in effect then, the one making the highest score (WG0AT-N0A) among those 6 would have been the winner. That may explain the first-timer award a bit better.

Remember this is only a very brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. OCTOBER CHALLENGE RESULTS: Paul N8XMS says it best about the October challenge: "I was looking over the results for the October challenge and was struck by the small number of entries. There were certainly many more contacts with N#A stations. I wonder why people didn't bother to submit them for the challenge? I imagine this could be a little bit

discouraging to you (plural - the officers). So let me offer my personal "thank you" to all of the club officers for all of the fine work that you do. I, for one, really enjoy the challenges and greatly appreciate all of the effort that goes into them."

Yes it is very disappointing to see that with nearly 4,000 members in the club, only a dozen or so will participate in our challenges. Why? We don't know. One member said the challenges are too hard. Well, if they were much easier, they wouldn't even be worthy of being called challenges. Still, with that in mind, Tom WY3H, our president and challenges manager has come up with some what he considers to be easier challenges for 2010. Rules for all 12 2010 challenges are now posted on the web site. Look them over and send your comments to Tom.

The October challenge was a very easy one and carried with it a handsome prize which makes it even more mysterious why so few members entered. They could have earned a beautiful CW-theme lamp for their shack or den simply by making as many QSO's with our special event anniversary stations as possible and being the one who made the most.

Anyway with all that being said, let's get down to the stats. Of the 9 entries, N1LU made the most band-QSO's with our N#A stations, and will be receiving the lamp donated by Bill W0EJ. It will be mailed by our new Prizes Manager Mike KC2EGL. N1LU and K3WWP won the certificates for the top two totals of different N#A band-QSO's.

As always, full challenge info and results can be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - The biggest news is the converting of emailing our newsletter announcements from 8 individual members to one QTH.net mailing list. Normally when something is working very well, you don't attempt to fix it. The 8 current plus 2 former members doing the emailings - K5DUZ, AA4W, EI2GP (replaced W2LJ), VA3RJ, 2U0BGE (replaced W5RJ), N9GOD, WB0OEW, and K4IWL - all did a wonderful job. However with a unified mailing list we are now able to not only email the newsletter announcements in one blow, but have a vehicle to distribute any news that may be stale or dated by the time of the next newsletter. We are NOT going to send announcements every time a member sneezes as some clubs seem to do with their mail lists. We foresee a minimum of 2 newsletter announcement emailings each month with a maximum of 2 or 3 extra emailings for late breaking news items. NO MORE than that. Only club officers will be posting to the list. It is not a general reflector. We want to know how you feel about this new system. We have had several favorable comments on the tests we've done so far. Thanks to all who commented. There were also two questions about it. One asked if he would be flooded with emails from it. I addressed that above. Another is concerned about the passwords being sent out in plain text in email. I fail to see why that is a fear. I'm sure no one is going to use the password for anything but the QTH.net list so even if it is stolen, there's nothing worthwhile taking for the thief.

- Dennis N1IMW's attempt to put W1AW on the air for NAQCC members on October 26th again came up short of expectations as his time was limited by the ARRL. Not to be discouraged, Dennis is going to try again on November 19th at 2PM EST or 1900Z on 20M.

If there are any changes, we now have our new mail list to notify you of them up to the last minute.

- Another new prize donation has been made. Our newsletter cartoonist Dick, W9CBT has donated a book of his ham radio cartoons to be awarded in a way to be decided by our Prize Manager Mike KC2EGL. Watch the Prize page in the main section of our web site for details

when they become available.

- Don't forget our hidden call sign in the newsletter. Those who read the newsletter regularly know all about it now, and are just searching and waiting for their call to show up somewhere. So we're not going to say much more about it other than a short announcement each issue from now on. The hidden call sign will be composed of upper and lower case letters and be in an obviously out of context place. If it's yours and you let us know via **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** before the publication date (December 5) of the next newsletter, you win 100 NAQCC QSL's. If it's not yours, you get the satisfaction of finding it, nothing more. We had our quickest winner to date when Stan K4UK found his call just a few hours after the posting of our last newsletter. Mike KC2EGL will be making arrangements with Stan to get him the 100 NAQCC QSL's donated by the NAQCC for those who find their hidden calls.

We haven't mentioned it for a while so here is how the member is selected. We have an Excel spreadsheet with one cell containing a formula that generates a random number from 1 to the current number of the newest member (as of this newsletter that's 1 through 3952). Then to make it even more random, the spreadsheet is recalculated 7 times and the number that comes up is the winner. The call is looked up in our membership list and a graphic of the call is created and hidden somewhere in the newsletter.

- We don't like to boast, but we are proud of the accuracy of our membership list. Since we can't always depend on members to notify us of changes for whatever reason, we search the FCC database every 5 days for changes of call and/or address for each of our members. It's time consuming but it is rewarding especially when we receive an email like this one from Loren K7CWQ who says, "John, thank you. I received my vanity call last Saturday. What a hassle. QRZ and NAQCC are the only ones to help me out. If only ARRL and eHam could be as helpful. thanks again, 72 Loren K7CWQ." That was received shortly after we sent Loren an updated membership certificate after our regular FCC check on Tuesday.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: - The premise for our Participation award is encouraging our members to participate in our sprints and challenges by awarding points for doing so. If you participate in a monthly challenge you get 1 point. Participate in a monthly sprint, that's 1 point. However if you do both in the same month, that's NOT 2, but 3 points. Points are totalled for the entire year in three divisions - Eastern USA, Western USA, hc01: VE/DX. The top score in each division gets a handsome certificate and the satisfaction of knowing they are one of the most important assets of the club. There's another bonus too. The top OVERALL score gets a free one year subscription to the FISTS club, or a free 1 year renewal if they are already a FISTS member. Our thanks go to FISTS for this generous offer which shows how closely two similar clubs can work together. In case of a tie for top score, we have a NFL-like tiebreaker system set up.

So far we've issued the following Participation awards:

Yearly certificates and points earned:
2005 - max 27 pts as we started in April - no divisions this year
K3WWP (27)

2006 - max 36 pts - first year with divisions
East K3WWP (36)
West W5ESE & W5TVW (6)
VE/DX VA3RKM (20)

2007 - max 36 pts
East K3WWP (36)
West NU7T & WY7N (11)
VE/DX VE3HUR (36)

2008 - max 36 pts
East K3WWP (36)
West NU7T (25)
VE/DX VE3HUR (24)

FISTS MEMBERSHIP: (K3WWP not eligible by his own wishes)
2007 VE3HUR (36)
2008 W2JEK (32)

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

5. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT - FROM K5DUZ and N3IJR: -

The Elmer project is completely co-ordinated by Ron and Karl. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)

The NAQCC QRS Net convenes each Monday at 0130Z when Standard time is in effect and 0030Z during Daylight savings time (Sunday evening at 8:30PM here in the USA Eastern time zone) on 7122.5 kHz from ??? through October and 3595.0 kHz from November through ???. Everyone is invited to check in for some hands-on CW teaching and learning. QRO is permitted for this one NAQCC activity since learning CW is so important.

Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

6. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

"Who Said You Cant Take It With You?"

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

(disclaimer) Any views expressed here are those of the member submitting them, and may not be in agreement with those of the NAQCC.

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - Looks like none of our members has done anything newsworthy since our last newsletter. Or else they don't think it was newsworthy. At any rate, I didn't receive anything from our news editor Paul for this issue. So I'll bore(?) you with what I've been up to, and it's really not all that much as far as ham radio goes. I continue to get my daily streak QSO as well as working on our NAQCC challenges and of course our NAQCC sprints. That's pretty much the limit of my activity recently. I will be putting in a big effort in the CQWW DX Contest later this month. That and the ARRL DX Contest are, next to our NAQCC sprints, my favorite contests. Who knows? - perhaps I'll be able to get KL7 on 80 meters this time as I did with KH6 back in the ARRL test earlier this year. That would complete my 80M QRP CW simple wire antenna WAS. As unlikely as that may seem, even more unlikely would be me getting DE and MD in the ARRL 10M Contest next month to finish my 10M QRP CW simple wire antenna WAS. If both events should happen, then I'd have a 5BWAS QRP CW simple wire antennas.

Enough dreaming. Let's talk about reality and something that truly surprised me. I never thought I could use a bug again after 40+ years using keyers. Well, I was wrong. Even more so, I thought if I could use the bug, it would then adversely affect my keyer fist. Wrong again. I am now at the point where I can go seamlessly between bug and keyer without missing a beat,

both with my right hand. So sometimes when the going gets slow, I alternate among straight key, bug, and keyer for my CQ's. If there's a moral, I guess it is never sell yourself short as you don't know what you can do till you try it. I think that is the bottom line to why some folks "can't" learn CW. They don't believe they can do it, so they don't even bother trying.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.